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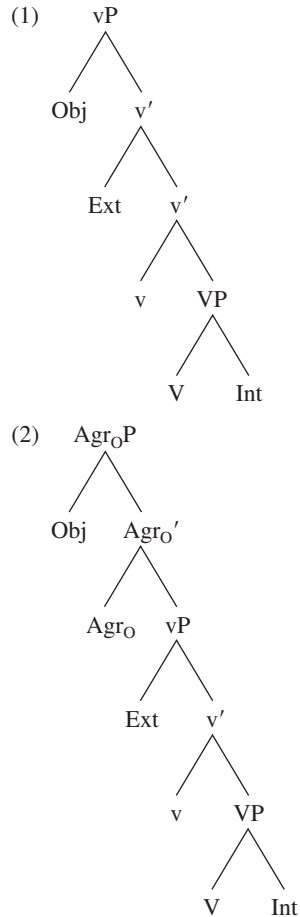
OBJECT SHIFT WITH RAISING
VERBS

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In minimalist work hypothesizing multiple specifiers associated with a single head, Chomsky (1995:sec.4.10, 2000) proposes that objects are formally licensed in an outer specifier of vP, a projection headed by a light verb representing causative or agentive semantics. In (1) the positions where the subject and direct object are generated are indicated (as *Ext* and *Int*, respectively), as well as the position where the object is formally licensed (*Obj*). In comparison to earlier analyses in the principles-and-parameters framework, this proposal continues to assume a separation between positions where elements are *generated* (the θ -positions) and positions where elements are *formally licensed* (the Case positions), but the formal licensing positions are no longer defined as specifiers of separate functional ‘‘agreement’’ heads, as in (2).

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The structure in (1) has the advantage that two seemingly independent relations—namely, assignment of a θ -role to the external argument and assignment of (“accusative”) Case to the direct object—are concentrated in a single head, *v*. That these two functions are related is expressed in Burzio’s Generalization (Burzio 1986:178).

(3) *Burzio’s Generalization*

- a. A verb that does not take an external argument cannot assign accusative Case.
- b. A verb that cannot assign accusative Case does not take an external argument.

In earlier frameworks the correlations expressed in (3) could not be fully explained. Assuming the structure in (1), (3) is explained if a verb that does not assign an external argument simply lacks *vP* in its verb phrase structure (cf. Chomsky 1995:315–316).

In this squib I present an argument showing that the reduction

of a structure like (2) to a structure like (1) is nevertheless incorrect. The evidence involves ‘‘restructuring’’ constructions in Dutch, where the internal argument of an embedded verb is formally licensed in the functional domain of a matrix verb that itself does not take an external argument. If verbs without an external argument lack vP, the formal licensing position for the internal argument of the embedded verb cannot be the outer specifier of vP, but must be a specifier of an independent functional head. This is accommodated in (2), but not in (1).¹

Consider first a simple perception verb construction in Dutch.

- (4) ... dat ik Jan gisteren zag
that I Jan yesterday saw
'... that yesterday I saw Jan'

Here the argument of the perception verb *zag* ‘saw’, *Jan*, is separated from the verb by the sentence adverb *gisteren* ‘yesterday’. Following Vanden Wyngaerd (1989), I take this to imply that the object noun phrase moves to a licensing position in the functional domain. Vanden Wyngaerd, who shows by application of standard tests (locality and binding) that the object shift is A-movement, describes the object’s licensing position as [Spec, Agr_{OP}] (5a). In the structure (1) proposed by Chomsky (1995), the licensing position would be the outer specifier position of *v* (5b).²

- (5) a. ... [CP dat [ik [AgroP Jan [vP gisteren [vP ⟨ik⟩ [vP zag
 ⟨Jan⟩]]]]]]]
 b. ... [CP dat [ik [vP Jan [v' gisteren [v' ⟨ik⟩ [vP zag
 ⟨Jan⟩]]]]]]]

In an exceptional-Case-marking (ECM) construction involving the same perception verb, the external argument of the embedded verb appears in the same position in the functional domain of the matrix verb as is occupied by the internal argument of the perception verb in (4).

- (6) ... dat ik Jan gisteren zag winnen
that I Jan yesterday saw win
'... that yesterday I saw Jan win'

¹ In Dutch, restructuring verbs include perception verbs, causative verbs, raising verbs, and a limited number of control verbs. It is assumed here that restructuring constructions in Dutch do not involve (rightward) movement of the embedded verb (see Zwart 1994, 1996), and that the position of the internal arguments in the examples presented here (i.e., nonadjacent to the verb) is the result of object movement into the matrix clause (as these arguments precede matrix adverbs and matrix negation). The exact conditions and operations giving rise to restructuring cannot be discussed in the context of this squib.

² I ignore the question of the exact adjunction position of the adverb in sentences like (4), which in itself yields a potentially significant difference between the two types of analysis in (5).

In a principles-and-parameters analysis (see (2)), this position would again be [Spec, Agr_{OP}] (7a), whereas in Chomsky's (1995) proposal (see (1)), it would be the outer specifier of vP (7b).

- (7) a. ... [CP dat [Agr_{SP} ik [Agr_{OP} Jan [vP gisteren [vP ⟨ik⟩
[vP zag [vP ⟨Jan⟩ [vP winnen]]]]]]]]]
b. ... [CP dat [TP ik [vP Jan [v' gisteren [v' ⟨ik⟩ [vP zag
[vP ⟨Jan⟩ [vP winnen]]]]]]]]]

If the embedded verb *winnen* 'win' takes an internal argument such as *de race* 'the race', it, too, is moved to a licensing position in the functional domain of the matrix verb.³

- (8) ... dat ik Jan de race gisteren zag winnen
that I Jan the race yesterday saw win
'... that yesterday I saw Jan win the race'

For the 'agreement phrase analysis' (2), this implies that a sequence of Agr_{OP}s must be assumed (9a). For the multiple specifier analysis (1), it implies that the number of outer specifiers of v may be increased to accommodate the number of arguments to be licensed (9b).

- (9) a. ... [CP dat [Agr_{SP} ik [Agr_{OP} Jan [Agr_{OP} de race [vP gisteren
[vP ⟨ik⟩ [vP zag [vP ⟨Jan⟩ [vP winnen ⟨de race⟩]]]]]]]]]
b. ... [CP dat [TP ik [vP Jan [v' de race [v' gisteren [v' ⟨ik⟩
[vP zag [vP ⟨Jan⟩ [vP winnen ⟨de race⟩]]]]]]]]]

Neither assumption seems particularly problematic.⁴

Notice that the perception verb *zien* 'see' itself is a transitive verb, which therefore implies the presence of vP in the matrix clause. The examples in (5) and (7) suggest a generalization along the lines in (10), which is often held to be true.

- (10) A verb α can appear as the matrix verb in an ECM construction iff α is a transitive (accusative-Case-assigning) verb.

These cases, then, do not help us decide whether object noun phrases are licensed in the specifier position of vP, as in (1), or in the specifier position of a separate functional head, as in (2). The following facts, however, do.

Raising verbs in Dutch, like *schijnen* 'seem', show the same transparency effects as perception verbs. The only difference is that raising

³ A caveat, expressed by an anonymous reviewer, is that in restructuring constructions in Dutch, adjuncts associated with the embedded verb are also realized in the matrix clause, suggesting that the movement of *Jan* and *de race* 'the race' in (6) and (8) may not be "Case driven." However, since the position of *Jan* and *de race* 'the race' in (6) and (8) is an A-position (see above), we may assume it to be the formal object-licensing position under discussion in this squib.

⁴ For the multiple specifier hypothesis, the structure in (9b) implies that the uninterpretable nominal feature of v checked by *de race* must "escape erasure" (see Chomsky 1995:354).

verbs, unlike perception verbs, take no external argument. If the embedded verb is transitive, its external argument raises to the subject position of the matrix clause, and the internal argument raises to the same object-licensing position that we saw in (4), (6), and (8).⁵

- (11) ... dat Jan de race gisteren scheen te zullen winnen
 that Jan the race yesterday seemed to will win
 ‘... that Jan yesterday seemed to be going to win the race’

Schijnen 'seem', being a raising verb, has no external argument and does not by itself have the ability to assign accusative Case to a grammatical object.

- (12) a. *Piet schijnt.
Piet seems
b. #Piet schijnt een idioot.
Piet seems an idiot

(12b) is interpretable only as a (quasi) copular construction, not as a transitive construction.

Since *schijnen* 'seem' takes no external argument, we must conclude, by (3), that it has no vP in its verb phrase structure. Since object shift is A-movement (Vanden Wyngaerd 1989), this means that (11) can only be analyzed as in (13), with a structure involving a separate functional projection (FP) for licensing a grammatical object.

- (13) ... [_{CP} dat [_{Ag_{TS}PTP} Jan [_{FP} de race [_{VP} gisteren [_{VP} scheen
[_{TP} te zullen [_{VP} <Jan> [_{VP} winnen <(de race)>]]]]]]]]]

The status of FP in (13) can of course not be determined conclusively from these facts alone. However, it is clear that FP is distinct from the vP envisioned by Chomsky (1995:315), since *schijnen* ‘seem’ lacks the causative/agentive semantics imported by the ‘little v’ proposed there. In the context of the analysis in (2), FP can be identified straightforwardly as Agr_{OP}. Sentences like (11), then, demonstrate that object licensing may take place in the absence of a vP. This is accommodated by the structure in (2), with FP = Agr_{OP}, but not by the structure in (1).

(11) also shows the generalization in (10) to be incorrect. The correct generalization appears to be the following:

- (14) Formal licensing of an object in the functional domain of
a verb α takes place
a. when α has an external argument, or

⁵ The modal auxiliary *zullen*, indicating future tense, is included in the embedded clause in order to make sure that the sentence adverb *gisteren* 'yesterday' is construed with the matrix verb, demonstrating raising into the matrix clause. Note that verbs like *schijnen* 'seem' do not allow complement clause extraposition or the so-called third construction (a combination of object shift and complement clause extraposition), so that there is no doubt that (11) involves restructuring (see Rutten 1991:78–79).

- b. when α enters into a restructuring relation with a verb β in the complement domain of α , and β has an external argument.

If (14) is correct, the requirement on ECM in (10) is too strong. If the ECM verb is a restructuring verb, the only requirement is that the verb it restructures with is transitive.

Many other examples may be adduced that demonstrate the same point. (15) is an example of a transitive expletive construction (TEC), (16) an example of a passive construction.⁶

- (15) ... dat er iemand het huis gisteren scheen te
that there someone the house yesterday seemed to
zullen kopen
will buy
'... that someone yesterday seemed to be going to buy the house'

- (16) ... dat Jan het boek niet werd geacht te
that Jan the book not was considered-PART to
hebben gelezen
have read-PART
'... that Jan was not considered to have read the book'

(15) shows three phrases in the functional domain of the matrix clause (i.e., to the left of the matrix adverb *gisteren* 'yesterday'), which in the principles-and-parameters theory of clause structure may be taken to occupy the specifier positions of Agr_SP, TP, and Agr_OP (cf. Chomsky 1995:342). The matrix verb is again *schijnen* 'seem', which lacks a vP. But *schijnen* is a restructuring verb, having a transitive verb, *kopen* 'buy', in its complement domain. Hence, the presence of a position for formal licensing of the object is due to the presence of a transitive verb in the complement domain of the matrix verb. (Chomsky's (1995:sec. 4.10) discussion of TECs ignores the crucial cases, where the TEC involves a multiverb construction with an unaccusative matrix verb.)

(16) involves a passive matrix verb, a standard case covered by Burzio's Generalization (3). Thus, passive verbs do not express an external argument, and they fail to assign accusative Case. In the current framework this is most elegantly described if we assume that passive verbs lack vP. Again, the object *het boek* 'the book' cannot be licensed in the specifier position of a vP. Crucially, however, there is a transitive verb *lezen* 'read' in the complement domain of the matrix verb, and the construction as a whole is a restructuring construction. Again, all that seems to be required is transitivity somewhere in the restructuring complex, not necessarily in the matrix clause.

⁶ The negative adverb *niet* 'not' in (16) is used (just like the adverb *gisteren* 'yesterday' in (15) and elsewhere) as a matrix clause element indicating that arguments of the embedded clause appear in the matrix clause.

The facts discussed provide a strikingly compelling argument in support of a structure like (2). In view of this, we need to consider potential weaknesses in the argumentation.

The weakest part appears to be the assumption that raising verbs lack vP. This assumption is no longer made in Chomsky to appear: 23, where transitives and unergatives are said to involve a “complete” v, and unaccusatives and passives what we may call an “incomplete” v. “Incomplete” v lacks the feature attracting noun phrases to its specifier position. “Complete” v combines the two functions of “little v” described above: it expresses causative or agentive semantics, licenses an external argument in its inner specifier, and licenses an object in an outer specifier (Chomsky, to appear:9).

The observations regarding restructuring and object shift with raising verbs in Dutch could now be rephrased as involving a process that upgrades the “incomplete” v to the status of “complete” v, enabling it to license arguments of the embedded verb in its specifier position(s). As one reviewer points out, this analysis is more or less equivalent to the alternative analysis involving agreement phrases.

However, the reason that the analysis involving an “incomplete” v looks so similar to the analysis involving agreement phrases is that “incomplete” v, unlike “complete” v, is not an expression of some aspect of lexical semantics. “Complete” v, the original “little v” proposed by Chomsky (1995:315), is clearly identified as a causative/agentive light verb. Until some semantic identification for “incomplete” v has been given, “incomplete” v looks much more like an unidentified functional head F than like “complete” v. It would be misleading to employ the symbol v when referring to this F, suggesting that we are dealing with a variant of “little v.”

The objective of this squib is simply to point out the presence of such a functional head F in raising constructions. I do agree that restructuring has the effect that the capacity to license an object is passed on from the embedded verb (in fact, the v of the embedded verb) to the matrix verb. But that does not imply that the matrix clause involves a vP, or that objects are licensed in a specifier of vP.

The parallelism between simple constructions like (4) and restructuring constructions like (8) and (11) is captured only when “little v,” as the source of transitivity, invariably transfers its object-licensing capacity to some functional head (H). H can then be merged directly to vP, or, in restructuring configurations, to the vP (8) or VP (11) of a higher verb. But of course this is essentially the analysis in which objects are licensed in the specifier position of an agreement phrase (cf. (2)). The alternative, where H = “little v” in (4) and (8) but H = F (“incomplete” v) in (11), just detracts from the more elegant analysis allowed by a structure like (2).

In conclusion, the facts discussed in this squib suggest that the relation between transitivity (the presence of vP in a verb phrase) and formal licensing of an object noun phrase (accusative Case assignment) is indirect. Consequently, the object cannot be licensed in the outer

specifier of a causative/agentive vP, but must be licensed in the specifier position of a functional projection that is dependent on, but structurally separated from, vP.

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